



## The Hybrid Vehicle and Alternative Fuel Report

November 15, 2013

This report is a summary of articles appearing in popular, business, and technical media referring to the impact of fuel costs and fuel efficiency on vehicle technology, development, and markets. At the end of the report is a list of all articles summarized, with hyperlinks to internet sources where available. Some hyperlinks may require free registration or paid subscriptions to access. *The Hybrid Vehicle and Alternative Fuel Report (ISSN: 1946-1011)* is compiled by Thomas L. R. Smith, Ph. D., Economic Analysis Branch of the Budget and Financial Analysis Division, Washington State Department of Transportation. Contact the editor at [smithtm@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:smithtm@wsdot.wa.gov) or (360) 705-7941. Contributions of articles and positive comments about *The Report* are welcome.

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**National Hybrid and Plug-in Sales Data for October 2013:** Hybrid sales for October were unchanged from September 2013 and unchanged from October 2012, [HybridCars.com](http://HybridCars.com) (Cobb, November 4, 2013) reported. Usually sales drop in October. Prius sales also dropped. The three Prius models accounted for just over 40% of hybrid sales. Even though, Toyota still dominates with 64.55% of the hybrid market. Ford's Fusion and C-Max hybrids improved their percentages. Ford has the second largest segment in the market with 14%. Hybrids accounted for 2.79% of the new car market.

Plug-in cars did improved over both September and the year previous. The Prius Plug-in led the pack by a thin margin, selling 2,095 cars. HybridCars.com credits the improved Prius sales to the recent price cut. The Chevy Volt sold 2,022 copies, while the Nissan Leaf was nipping at the Volt's heels, selling just 20 cars less than the Volt. Tesla and two Ford plug-ins, the C-Max Energi and Fusion Energi, all sold over 1,000 vehicles. Overall, Plug-ins took 0.84% of the new car market, their best percentage ever. Meanwhile, the Nissan leaf was the best-selling car of any type in Norway, according to a Reuters (November 1, 2013) report in [Automotive News Europe](http://Automotive News Europe). In September, the Tesla Model S was Norway's best seller.

### HYBRIDS

**Flashback Friday:** We don't know how this found our way into our inbox, but we've come into the possession of an article from the June 2004 issue of [Motor Trend](http://Motor Trend) called the "2004 Alternative Fuel & Hybrid Vehicle Guide" (Cogan). The article was optimistic about the chances that, by now, you would find yourself in a vehicle "powered by an advanced powerplant [sic] that's far removed from the familiar internal combustion now residing beneath your hood." In 2004, Motor Trend said that while "the darling of technology buffs and environmentalists" was the electric vehicle, there were other interesting options to look at. Most of the EVs discussed in the article are gone, while

there are new ones on the market. Meanwhile, the article points out that at one time Honda's Insight and Civic once outsold Toyota's Prius.

The University of Maryland<sup>1</sup> in College Park is building a hybrid and electric vehicle laboratory in the school's electrical engineering department, the student paper *The Diamondback* (Serpico, November 6, 2013) said. The director of the lab, Dr. Alireza Khaligh, says that the lab will fill a void in training automotive engineers, since most are trained in mechanical engineering.

Due to violations of the Clean Air Act at its coal-fired power plants, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) was required by a court settlement to make \$350 million available on clean energy projects in its service area, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* (November 8, 2013) divulged. One of the projects the TVA initiated was providing hybrid vehicles to 25 local utilities in the Tennessee Valley. Oxford, Mississippi, took advantage of the deal procuring two hybrid pickup trucks and a hybrid bucket truck.

## ELECTRIC VEHICLES

**“When we kiss, fire:”**<sup>2</sup> A second Tesla Model S caught on fire recently, *Bloomberg* (Ohnsman, October 28, 2013) stated. This fire occurred on October 18 outside a town on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula when the Tesla went through a concrete barrier and hit a tree. Speed, probably excessive, was involved. The driver walked away from the crash. The Bloomberg report also had an update on the Washington State Tesla fire back on October 1. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration closed its investigation of that fire and concluded that the fire was not caused by defective material or design and found no “violations of U.S. safety standards.” A Kelly Blue Book analyst said that the lack of engine noise revving to high speeds may remove the sensation of speed from the Tesla. We assume that Teslas have speedometers that let Tesla drivers know how fast they are going, but not having been in the driver's seat of one of these technological marvels, we could be wrong. This development was provided by *Hybrid Report* reader Doug McClanahan.

And fire number three struck a Tesla in Smyrna, Tennessee, Associated Press (November 7, 2013) posted in *The Washington Post*. Like the Seattle Tesla fire, this fire was caused when a piece of road debris, trailer hitch on the roadway, bounced up into the underside of the vehicle and punctured the battery compartment. The fire was so intense that the front of the car melted; however, the shielding on the driver's compartment protected the driver from injury. Tesla has no plans for a safety recall. In addition to damaging the vehicles, the fires have damaged Tesla's share price, the *Daily Mail*

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<sup>1</sup> One of the editor's many alma maters.

<sup>2</sup> Bruce Springsteen, “Fire,” Columbia Records, 1977.

(Chorley, November 8, 2013) said. Tesla stock lost one fifth of its value due to the fires. Reader Doug McClanahan also alerted us to this development.

Even though electric car sales make up less than one percent of auto sales in the U. S., in Atherton, California, near Palo Alto, Teslas accounted for 15% of new registrations for the year, *International Business Times* (Young, October 31, 2013) observed. Not only that, but the Tesla is “the best-selling car in eight of the 25 wealthiest American ZIP codes.” The California cities of Los Altos and Portola saw 10% of their registrations from Teslas.

Tesla plans to build 500,000 electric vehicles per year at some point in the future. However, to do that, Tesla would use up all the lithium battery production capacity for all applications in the world. To achieve that level of production, Elon Musk, the founder of Tesla, is contemplating building a single factory that could double the world’s supply of lithium batteries, *Automotive News* (Rechtin, November 5, 2013) mentioned. In the meantime, Tesla is contracting with Panasonic to increase battery production to accommodate Tesla’s newest model.

Elon Musk, Tesla’s founder, was recently named as advisor to Nick Clegg, the United Kingdom’s Deputy Prime Minister, on electric cars, the *Daily Mail* (Chorley, November 8, 2013) sent. Mr. Musk will advise the government on how to encourage the increase of electric and other low-emission vehicles in the Kingdom.

The state of Texas is offering up to \$2,500 rebates to people who buy or lease electric cars. However, Texans who buy Teslas are not eligible for the deal, *PluginCars* (Webb, November 8, 2013) revealed. Teslas cannot be sold in the Lone Star State and the rules of the rebate plan specify that the car has to be bought in Texas.

**Non-Tesla News:** Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst; the joint Air Force, Army, and Navy base in New Jersey; was selected to test the Department of Defense’s (DOD) Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G) project, the U. S. Air Force Air Mobility Command’s *Inside AMC* (Throneberry, November 1, 2013) disclosed. V2G will not only test the effectiveness and cost efficiency on non-tactical military vehicles, but will also test the ability of electric vehicles to store power to serve as back-ups to the Base’s power grid.

The Franklin, Indiana, *Daily Journal*<sup>3</sup> (Le, *Associated Press*, November 2, 2013) asserts that electric car charging is strong on the Washington State segment of the West Coast Green Highway. There are 14 charging stations on Washington’s part of the route. They have been used 10,000 times, 1,125 of those charges in September. The most popular charging stations are in Bellingham, Burlington, and Tumwater. WSDOT’s own Tonia Buell is quoted in the article.

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<sup>3</sup> Also known as the *Daily Daily*.

There is, among proponents of electric vehicles, the belief that before wide-spread adoption of these vehicles occurs, there must be an adequate infrastructure built. A group of engineers at [Carnegie Mellon University](#) (Swaney, November 11, 2013) have found that a public infrastructure is not the problem. The problem, the Carnegie Mellon engineers postulate, is charging at home. The engineers say that most car charging will be done at home and estimate that 40% of homes in the U. S. have an electrical outlets available near where prospective electric cars will be parked. It's that other 60% of homes that's the problem. Those residences could be apartment complexes where there are no outlets available or older homes without garages or outlets near parking. Another problem could be lack of outlets available for second cars.

## ALTERNATIVE FUELS

In news that caught many by surprise, Washington's Jay Inslee signed a non-binding pact with the Governors of Oregon and California and the Premier of British Columbia to combat climate change, [The New York Times](#) (Wines, October 29, 2013) and other media outlets announced. In the pact, officially called the [Pacific Coast Action Plan on Climate and Energy](#) (Brown, Clark, Kitzhaber, & Inslee, October 28, 2013) the West Coast leaders pledge to: "lead national and international policy on climate change," "transition the West Coast to clean modes of transportation and reduce the large share of greenhouse gas emissions from this sector," and "invest in clean energy and climate-resilient infrastructure." In the transportation arena, the agreement calls on both Washington and Oregon to adopt low-carbon fuel standards and for all governments to align their standards and build a regional market. The governors also agreed to expand zero-emissions vehicles by setting a goal of 10% "of new vehicle purchases in public and private fleets by 2016." This goal is specifically oriented towards fleet managers, not individuals. High-speed rail is also encouraged to move passengers. Finally, the pact calls for the four powers to develop plans to encourage investment in alternative fuel fleets and to "support market transition to biofuels, electricity, natural gas and other low-carbon fuels." Section V of the agreement says that the plan has "no legal effect; impose no legally binding obligation enforceable in any court of law or other tribunal of any sort, nor create any funding expectation."

Deutsche Post DHL, the German delivery company, is introducing 63 trucks that run on either diesel or natural gas to their United Kingdom fleet, [Handy Shipping Guide](#) (November 7, 2013) delivered. The UK fleet now has 95 dual fuel trucks and has another 50 on order. In Europe, DHL has a fleet of 8,500 trucks that either use alternative fuels or have had aerodynamic changes to the vehicles to save fuel. In the US, DHL operates 80 hybrid vehicles out of its New York City office.

**COMING TO A LOCATION NEAR YOU:** The latest news on new charging stations which may or may not be somewhere close to you.

The [West Coast Green Highway](#), which runs from Vancouver, British Columbia, to San Diego, California, is in the news on both sides of the border. In British Columbia, BC Hydro and San Francisco's Greenlots SKY have established a program to install and manage fast chargers in the province, Canada's [The Globe and Mail](#) (Hunter, October 31, 2013) conveyed.

**United States:** The city of Marina in Monterey County, California opened two electric charging stations near Marina's community development office, [The Monterey Herald](#) (Parsons, October 29, 2013) heralded. The city hopes to install additional chargers, possibly near the library. Monterey County now has 32 chargers.

In addition to the West Coast Green Highway, Tesla Model S drivers have a separate network of 16 superchargers on I-5 and US 101 from San Diego to British Columbia, [The San Jose Mercury-News](#) (Hull, October 31, 2013) remarked. If you want to find those chargers and the other 15 stations in North America, you can go to Tesla's Supercharger [web site](#). The web site provides an interesting map where you can see where new chargers are planned in phases through 2015. Tesla drivers on I-90 travelling from Seattle to Boston will be able to get a charge in Mitchell, South Dakota, [Keloland Television](#) (Kennecke, November 8, 2013) broadcast. Another Tesla charger is planned for Rapid City, South Dakota.

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh (UWO) should have four charging stations up and running sometime this month, the [Advance-Titan](#) (Nyberg, October 31, 2013), UWO's student paper, advanced. UWO will charge \$2 per hour for charging or \$125 per year for an annual parking permit. Electric cars are limited to five hours in the charging space at a time.

Residents and commuters in St. Charles, Illinois, outside of Chicago, will get a charging station at the First Street parking garage, the [Chicago Tribune](#) (Baer, October 31, 2013) imparted. The charger will be available in December. There will be no charge for a charge. Just outside of Waukegan, Illinois, Lake Forest will install a charger that should be available at the end of this month. The Lake Forest City Council will charge \$1 per hour for a charge.

Chicagoland commuters will also have a charger at the Chicago Transit Authority Oakton-Skokie stop north parking lot in Skokie, the [Chicago Tribune](#) (Village of Skokie, November 5, 2013) reported. The charger can accommodate two vehicles at a time. Normally parking in the area is restricted to 15 minutes, but that will be waived for these spots. Charging is free for an indefinite period.

We learn from the [Colorado Springs Gazette's](#) Ramblin' Man, who tries to make a living doing the best he can<sup>4</sup>, that the Denver International Airport opened 10 new

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<sup>4</sup> Dickey Betts, "Ramblin' Man," Capricorn Records, October 1972.

charging stations (Wells, November 1, 2013). The chargers are of the level 1 variety, which are cheaper than level 2 and take about 8 hours to charge vehicles. This may be fine for airport parking, since the average car remains parked at the airport for a day and a half.

Empire State College in Saratoga Springs, New York, opened a fast charger at its building on West Avenue, the [Saratogian](#) (Post, November 1, 2013) said. The charger is part of Charge NY's plan to place 5,000 chargers around New York State.

University of Nevada Reno opened two new car chargers that are free to the public, California's [Capital Public Radio](#) (Plaskon, November 8, 2013) noted. Harrah's Hotel Casino has the only other charger in town, but plans are in the works to add 12 stations around the city.

East Kansas has 45 charging stations courtesy of Westar Energy, the [Wichita Business Journal](#) (Behlmann, November 8, 2013) journaled. You can locate a charger at Westar's [Charging Station Map](#).

Tullahoma, Tennessee, will get two chargers and a Volt, the [Tullahoma News](#) (Lapczynski, November 11, 2013) reported. One of the chargers will be dedicated for charging the Tullahoma Utility Board's Volt, while the other will be available to the public. The city had plans to install chargers at the community center, however, those chargers are on hold due to ECotality's bankruptcy.

The planned community of Centerra, near Loveland, Colorado, will get three new chargers, the [Coloradoan](#) (Staff, November 13, 2014) commented. The Rangeview office building will get one charger, while two shopping areas in the development will get the others.

Closer to home, Campbell's Resort in Chelan, Washington is getting the area's first charging station, [The Wenatchee World](#) (Pratt, November 13, 2013) pronounced. The charger is next to the Resort's Stehekin Ballroom. The charger is free to the public.

**Around the World:** The town of Digby, Nova Scotia installed a charging station at Town Hall, even though the Mayor is not aware of any electric vehicles in the area, [Nova News Now](#) (Riley, November 2, 2013) reported. The charger is free.

South of the Border, in Windsor, Canada,<sup>5</sup> the city council is establishing a charging station at the city's new aquatic centre downtown, [CBC News](#) (November 5, 2013) broadcast. The charger is free during an unspecified test period.

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<sup>5</sup> Go ahead, look at a map and you will find that Windsor is South of Detroit.



The city of Surrey is the first in British Columbia to have two fast-charging stations, [Surrey Now](#) (Zinn, November 4, 2013) pressed. The charger is at the Surrey Museum. The new charger joins several other level 2 chargers around the city.

In England, the City of York has installed new chargers in two parking areas in the city centre and in three park-and-ride lots, the [BBC](#) (November 5, 2013) said. Charging in York will cost 50p per hour with a 30p transaction fee. No one knows how much that is in real money.

## OTHER TECHNOLOGY

United Parcel Service (UPS) has introduced the On-Road Integrated Optimization and Navigation (ORION) system that will reduce the amount of fuel it burns, [Bloomberg](#) (Schlangenstein, October 29, 2013) barked. ORION collects data from customers, delivery vehicles, and drivers' handheld devices to calculate the route drivers should take. This report was sent to us by *Hybrid Report* subscriber Joseph D. Tario.

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*That is all.*